

**NEW  
LOOK!**

Britain's top-selling bike magazine

OCTOBER, 1980 60p (\$2.75 US)

# motorcycle **MECHANICS**

**PIILING ON THE  
POWER**

How we did it



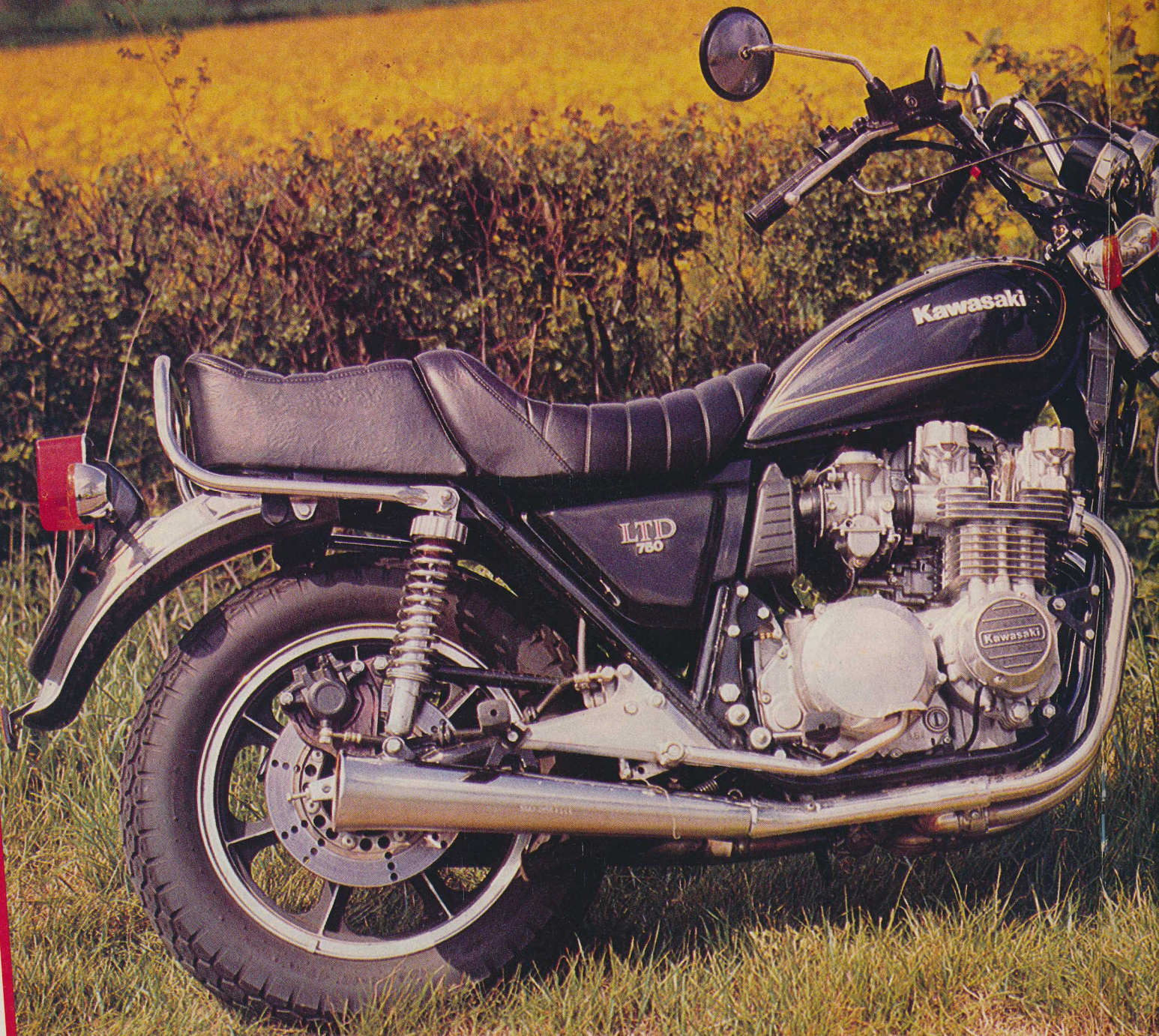
**Our fastest 750 in years**

Day and night on hottest 250

**Used bike guide** • Oversuits: What to wear



*On test* Kawasaki LTD Z750







# FAST CO. LTD.

Kawasaki's new Z750LTD  
for show and go . . . ▷



RIDERS who look down their noses at the new custom styles may find them put out of joint by Kawasaki's Z750Ltd. It's more go than show. And it's got a lot of both.

With a top speed of 123.74mph laying flat on the tank behind the big bars the Z750Ltd is the fastest 750 to be clocked by *Motorcycle Mechanics* in recent years.

Even so I must have been feeling one degree under. Kawasaki claim 123.75mph!

In top gear (fifth) the motor pulls flexibly from 1500rpm. But if you really want to get a move on keeping the revs above 4000 brings the best rewards.

During standing quarter practice runs the Z750Ltd blasted out a 12.52sec pass without really trying. But before this time could be worked at the engine dropped out of gear during a top speed run, over-revved and bent two exhaust valves.

Valve duration on this engine, basically a bored out Z650 is long to get the performance. This can lead to piston and valve contact if the engine is screamed. Kawasaki UK senior product technician Alex Dell reported after stripping the motor that this had occurred. The pistons on two and three cylinders had clipped the valves.

For this reason the Z750Ltd was not run on the LEDAR dyno to find bhp at the back wheel. But the Z750E which shares the same engine will be tested in a future issue with our usual full bhp and torque rundown.

Though the Ltd version has shorter exhausts which might possibly have an effect on power it should only be fractionally different from the Z750E if at all.

The point is the Ltd edition has the punch to back up its looks.

As a custom cruiser it successfully underplays its role, in my opinion, with its subdued black finish and gold pinstriping.

The best part about it was that it allowed me to ride contently within speed limits. I find that most of the time a bike's image sets my mood. If the Ltd had clip-ons and a

racing seat I would be inclined to gas it. Since it is a cruiser I was happy to play along, knowing that if I really wanted to let rip it was all there just waiting.

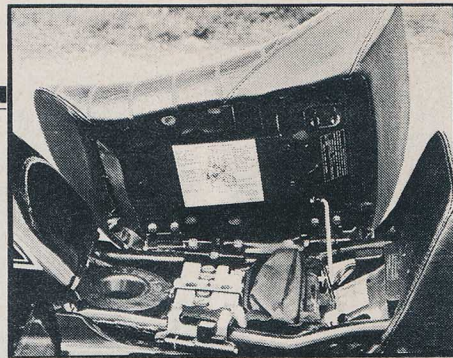
Apart from avoiding speeding tickets there's another bonus from sticking to limits. Improved petrol consumption. I was averaging just over 60mpg. The worst figure was 47.9mpg which included the speed testing session.

Of course there are disadvantages with the custom style. The teardrop tank holds only 2.6 gal. I once ran dry completely after taking a chance. Fortunately it was a downhill run to a nearby garage.

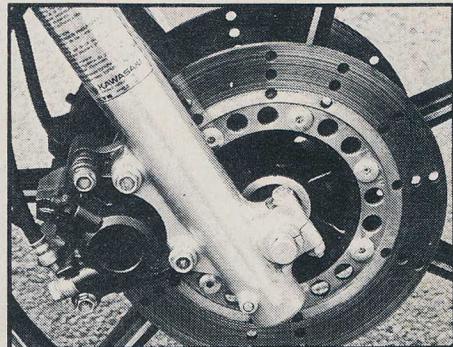
The big bars allow comfortable riding at 60mph, or even 70mph if there is no headwind. Holding speeds for long periods above this speed puts a lot of strain on the wrists.

Part of the responsibility for this can be blamed on the slightly peculiar angle of the bars. A line drawn along the top of the forearm would turn outwards when it reached the back of the hand. Most bars would allow the line to run straight on. It's this kink which causes the problem once you have been travelling more than a couple hours.

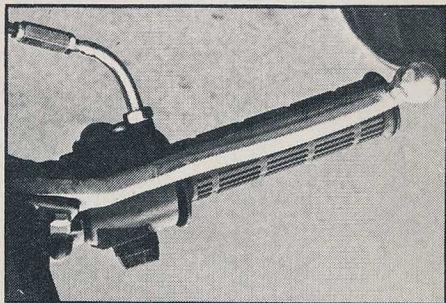
Bars apart, the comfort from the seat and suspension is top class. The smoothness of



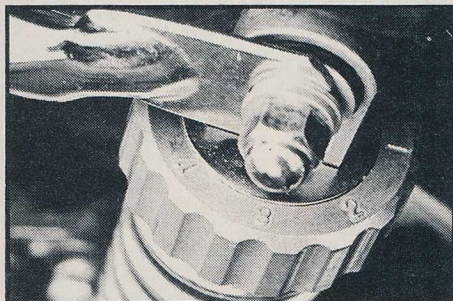
**Novel seat design.** The front half hinges to reveal toolkit and helmet lock. Pillion riders have a skyscraper ride.



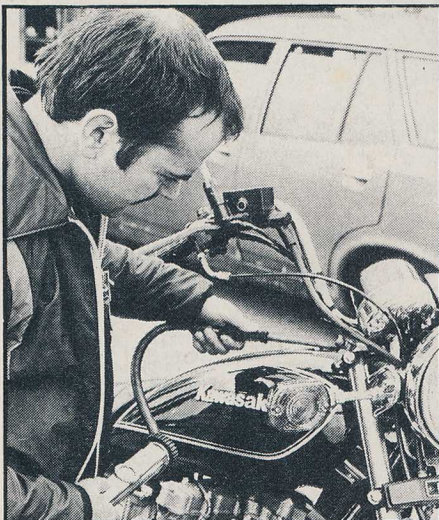
**Brakes are little on the vicious side at low speeds.** The long travel forks compress rather suddenly in sympathy.



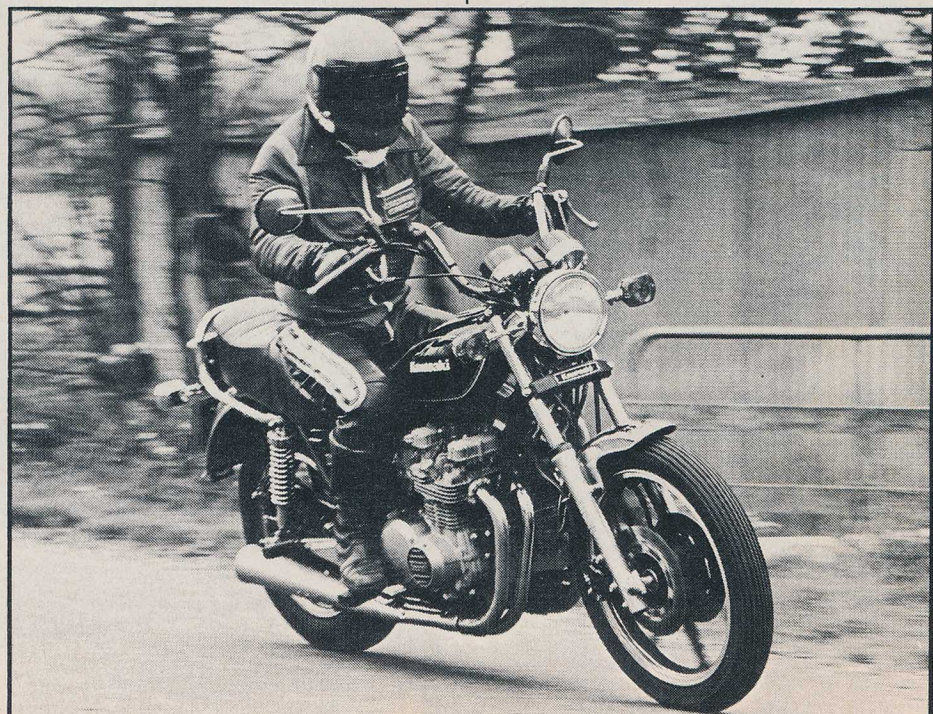
**The front lever is contoured to follow the line of the bars which look rather cluttered because of extended wiring.**



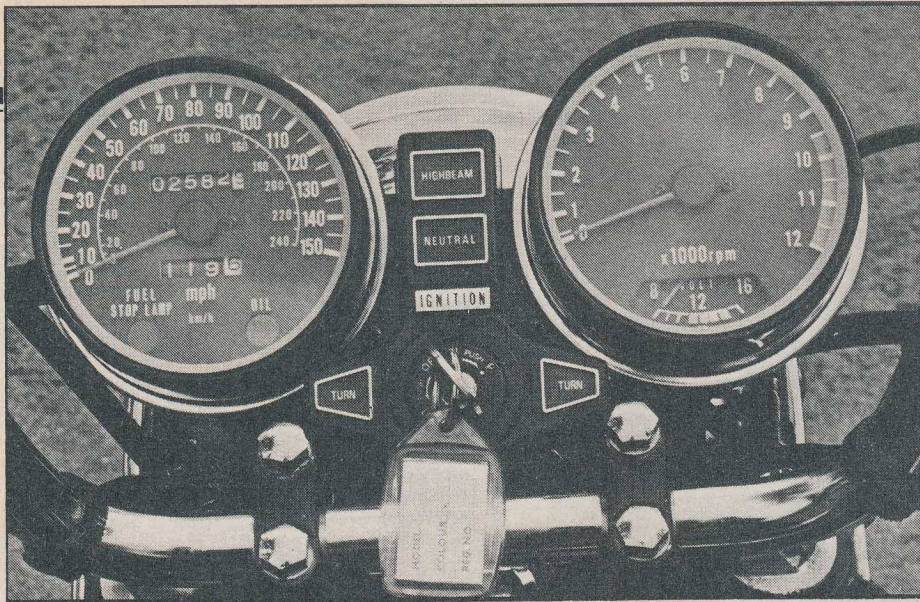
**The four-point damping adjustment is easily carried out by hand on the shocks.**



**The forks can be pumped up with careful use of an airline, though it's not strictly recommended. Use your own gauge.**







*Oil and fuel warning lights and voltmeter complement instruments in chrome pods.*

the engine and the plush suspension give the bike a Rolls Royce feel.

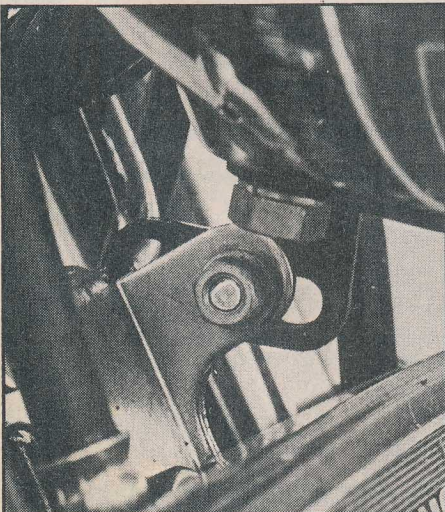
A lot of thought has gone into this model. The forks have an offset spindle to affect damping, springing and ride height. But they desperately need a cross-over tube to link both legs. It's extremely difficult to set the pressure equally with the present system.

The rear shocks have the usual five point spring preload adjustment. In addition there are four damping points easily adjustable by hand by the knurled ring at the top of the unit.

### Tester's verdict

(points scored out of ten)

Performance.....	9
Economy.....	8
Handling.....	7
Comfort.....	8
Appearance.....	8
Equipment.....	8
Value for money.....	8



*Headlight is easily adjusted with this pinch bolt. It's chrome like the mudguards and chainguard.*

According to Kawasaki specification this adjustment affects only the rebound damping. I rode with a pillion on the softest settings and the units were bottoming. Leaving the springs alone I adjusted the damping to number four. In theory this should have made no difference on compression but it helped a lot.

While trying for top speeds off the banking at the MIRA testing grounds the bike wallowed badly if the throttle was shut off halfway round the corner.

I let all the pressure out of the forks and set the rear shocks on the hardest preload and damping. This completely changed the attitude of the bike by lifting the rear end and adding weight bias to the front. It tightened up the handling enormously.

Back on the public road I put everything at the back on the softest which felt just right for my ten stone weight at modest speeds.

The great feature about the suspension is that you can tune it to your heart's content.

Though Kawasaki have been making a 750-4 for the home Japanese market for several years, 1980 is the first year Britain has seen a version.

In an attempt to keep the weight down the three stainless steel discs are mounted directly to the alloy wheels thus saving the weight of mounting bosses.

There's a neutral finder in the gearbox which makes finding neutral in traffic a doddle, though the neutral light could sometimes be unreliable. The steering lock is in the ignition switch. Very convenient. And the halogen headlight is exceptionally good.

Other refinements include a voltmeter, hazard flasher, fuel warning light, passenger grab rail, automatic ohc chain tensioner, needle roller swinging arm bearings, sintered metal disc pads and tubeless Japanese Dunlop tyres.

It adds up to a production custom bike with style and speed. Its looks will attract the non-conformists, the rebels seeking a ready-made alternative to the mainstream. It's a leader in a new wave. □

### SPECIFICATION

transverse dohc four cylinder four-stroke  
 Displacement .....738cc (45.02cu in)  
 Bore x stroke 66.0x54.0mm (2.60x2.13cu in)  
 Compression ..... 9.0  
 Carburettors .....four Keihin 34mm CV  
 Ignition..... transistorised with battery & coil  
 Lubrication ..... wet sump  
 Headlight .....12v 690/50watt  
 Battery ..... 12v 12Ah

### CHASSIS

Forks .oil damped, spring and air telescopic  
 Rear suspension: swing arm/five spring  
 preload and four damping adjustment  
 Front tyre .....3.25H19 Dunlop tubeless  
 Rear tyre ..... 130/90H16 Dunlop tubeless  
 Wheelbase..... 57.1in  
 Overall length..... 86.4in  
 Overall width..... 31.9in  
 Overall height..... 48.6in  
 Ground clearance..... 6.1in  
 Claimed dry weight..... 465lb  
 Castor..... 60 deg  
 Trail..... 4.77in  
 Brakes ..... three 8.9in diameter discs

### TRANSMISSION

Gear primary drive via wet multiplate  
 clutch to five speed constant mesh gearbox  
 and chain drive to rear wheel. Internal  
 gearbox ratios: 2.333, 1.531, 1.272, 1.040,  
 0.875 (top). Final reduction 2.462. Overall  
 reduction 5.492 (top).

### PARTS PRICES inc VAT

	£
Handlebar.....	10.14
Speedometer cable.....	2.25
Exhaust system complete.....	128.43
Ignition coil.....	14.56
Ignition/steering lock switch.....	22.60
Set of piston/rings.....	50.19
List price.....	1799.00
Delivery.....	24.15
Warranty: 12 months unlimited mileage, parts and labour	
Importer: Kawasaki UK, Deal Avenue Trad- ing Estate, Slough, Bucks. Tel 0753 38255.	

### PERFORMANCE

Max speed at MIRA.....	123.74mph
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile.....	12.52sec/105.25mph
Speedometer error . true speed-62.8mph at 70 indicated	
Claimed power.....	74hp at 9000rpm
Claimed torque.....	6.4kg-m at 7500rpm
Mpg..... best 61.8, worst 47.8, average 56.4	

### HOW IT COMPARES:

#### PRICE:

Kawasaki Z750Ltd.....	1799
Honda CB750KZ.....	1780
Yamaha XS750.....	1790
Suzuki GS850.....	1795

#### TOP SPEED:

Kawasaki Z750Ltd.....	124mph
Honda CB750KZ.....	116mph
Yamaha XS750.....	122mph
Suzuki GS850.....	115mph

#### MAX POWER:

Kawasaki Z750Ltd.....	—
Honda CB750KZ.....	70bhp
Yamaha XS750.....	54.5bhp
Suzuki GS850.....	66.2bhp

#### ISSUE TESTED:

Kawasaki Z750Ltd.....	Oct 80
Honda CB750KZ.....	July 79
Yamaha XS750.....	Nov 78
Suzuki GS850.....	Sep 79